

## Message Text

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41 S

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /031 W  
----- 026180

O 190845Z JAN 74 ZFF-6  
FM USINT DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 011  
WHITE HOUSE NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0011

PLEASE PASS TO SECSTATE PARTY  
E X D I S  
WHITE HOUSE PLEASE PASS TO SAM 86970

EO 11652: NA  
TAGS: OGEN SY  
SUBJ: SYRIAN POSITION ON GENEVA

1. YESTERDAY, JAN 18, ITALIAN AMBASSADOR CONVEYED TO ME  
FOLLOWING INFO WHICH HE SAID HE OBTAINED FROM RUMANIAN AMBASSADOR  
SAME DAY.

2. ACCORDING TO RUMANIAN, ON JAN 9, SOVIET AMBASSADOR CALLED  
TOGETHER AMBASSADORS OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND INFORMED THEM  
THAT BREZHNEV HAS, OVER LAST THREE OR FOUR WEEKS, SENT THREE  
LETTERS TO SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASAD. IN THESE MISSIVES,  
BREZHNEV NOTED THAT THE US-USSR DETENTE IS ONE OF THE MAJOR  
FORCES BEHIND GENEVA CONFERENCE AND STRESSED THAT THIS  
DETENTE IS IN BEST INTEREST OF ARABS. BREZHNEV THEN STRONGLY  
URGED ASAD TO ATTEND GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. ACCORDING TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR, ASAD REPLIED TO THE  
LETTERS BY STATING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO GO TO GENEVA BUT  
THAT HE NEEDS "A PERSONAL SUCCESS" BEFORE HE CAN ACCEPT IN ORDER  
WITHSTAND PRESSURES FROM THOSE BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SYRIA  
(IRAQ, LIBYA, PALESTINIAN EXTREMISTS) WHO OPPOSE THIS. IN  
ADDITION, ASAD REPORTEDLY TOLD BREZHNEV THAT HE WANTS TO GO  
TO GENEVA BECAUSE HE DOES NOT WISH TO BE LEFT ALONE FACING  
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ISRAEL FOLLOWING AN EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT.

4. ACCORDING SOVIET AMBASSADOR, ASAD THEN SPELLED OUT WHAT HE MEANT BY "PERSONAL SUCCESS" WHICH WOULD ENABLE HIM TO GO TO GENEVA. FIRST PHASE: IN RETURN FOR PROVIDING ISRAEL WITH THE LIST OF ISRAELI PRISONERS, ISRAELIS WOULD GIVE UP THREE STRATEGIC POSITIONS ON MT. HERMAN WHICH THEY OCCUPIED AFTER OCT 22. SECOND PHASE: IN RETURN FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL TO 1967 TRUCE LINES, SYRIA WOULD TURN OVER THE ISRAELI WOUNDED IN SYRIAN HANDS.

5. SOVIET AMBASSADOR CONTINUED THAT ASAD SAID THAT IF ABOVE PHASES COULD BE AGREED UPON AND PARTICULARLY IF THIS COULD BE DONE IN TANDEM WITH EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT, THEN ASAD WOULD BE IN A STRONG POSITION TO GO TO GENEVA.

6. ACCORDING TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR, ASAD IS NOT PREPARED TO RETURN ANY ISRAELI PILOTS IN SYRIAN HANDS UNTIL AFTER A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT. SOVIET AMBASSADOR TOLD HIS SOCIALIST COLLEAGUES THAT WHEN HE RAISED THIS SUBJECT WITH ASAD HE RECEIVED VERY STRONG AND NEGATIVE REACTION. (IN THIS REGARD, I LEARNED LAST NIGHT FROM A MEDICAL DOCTOR WITH GOOD ACCESS TO SYRIAN RULING CIRCLES THAT MOST OF THE ISRAELI PILOTS WERE KILLED WHEN THEIR PLANES WERE SHOT DOWN.)

7. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD ME THAT IN THE PAST, RUMANIAN AMBASSADOR HAS PROVIDED HIM WITH RELIABLE INFO AND HE BELIEVES ABOVE INFO IS REASONABLY CORRECT. IN ANY EVENT, HE PLANS REPORT ABOVE TO HIS MINISTRY.

8. MEANWHILE, LOCAL NEWS MEDIA HAVE CARRIED NEWS OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT STRAIGHT WITH NO RPT NO COMMENT. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH A LEBANESE MAGAZINE PUBLISHED ON FRDAY (JAN 18), HOWEVER, SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM IS QUOTED AS HOPING THAT A DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES ON BOTH THE EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN FRONTS CAN TAKE PLACE SIMULTANEOUSLY OTHERWISE ISRAEL WILL BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ITS FORCES ON THE GOLAN. MEDIA HAVE ALSO MADE NO RPT NO MENTION OF SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL, ALTHOUGH EVERYONE IN CITY MUST KNOW IT BY NOW FROM LISTENING TO VOA, BBC AND RADIO ISRAEL. SCOTES

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NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS CAPTION INSERTED PER INSTRUCTIONS  
S/S-O. MR. SARROS.

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## Message Attributes

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